

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

renting

*movies
DVDs*

1. (Currently Amended) A method for distributing optical recorded media to and from users, comprising the steps of:

coupling one or more kiosks to a central server via the Internet, each of the kiosks containing a plurality of optical recorded media;

determining, at the server, inventory of the optical recorded media of each of the kiosks;

routinely obtaining, at the server, operational status of each of the kiosks;

automatically interfacing with a first user via a touch screen at a first kiosk in a first transaction for first local optical recorded media, the touch screen providing a touch-selectable listing of optical recorded media, including the first local optical recorded media, contained within the first kiosk, the first kiosk being one of the kiosks, the first user being one of the users;

automatically communicating between the first kiosk and the server to authorize the first transaction;

dispensing the first local optical media from the first kiosk to the first user if the first transaction is approved; and

accepting return of the first local optical media ~~at~~ into rentable inventory of a second kiosk, the second kiosk being another one of the kiosks.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method of claim 1, wherein the step of accepting return of the first optical media comprises the steps of capturing a digital image of a first code on the first optical media and scanning the image to determine a group identifier, the group identifier indicating which of the kiosks the first optical media may be returned to, and accepting the first optical media ~~at~~ into rentable inventory of the second kiosk when the second kiosk is associated with the group identifier.